

**First in the West**

# First Irrigation Canal Rights Granted in 1878

(Submitted by Elias L. Day)

Utah pioneers are given credit for beginning and advancing the science of irrigation in the West, but it was not always an easy problem. Even now water for the Salt Lake Valley is being taken from Utah Lake for irrigation purposes. The first canal water rights were secured in 1878 by Henry Day and Joseph S. Rawlins.

There was no drought when the first water rights were granted at the Jordan Narrows

for a canal to serve the east side of the Salt Lake Valley, but Mr. Day and Mr. Rawlins were prompted to go to this particular point and file claim. Three days later representatives from a Salt Lake organization went to this point for the same purpose, but were too late.

The development of this canal was to furnish water to farmers on the east side of the valley, for land that would otherwise be without water. Because of this, Mr. Day and Mr. Rawlins permitted farmers desiring stock in the irrigation company to work out their shares by aiding in the construction. It took 15 years to build the canal from the Jordan Narrows to South Cottonwood.

A dam was constructed at the narrows which backed up water in the Jordan River and also Utah Lake. From this higher elevation water emptied into the canal. Joseph Rawlins was president of the company and Henry Day superintendent.

In 1905 the water level of Utah Lake was so low that pumps had to be installed. Gravity would no longer keep the canal filled and farmers had come to depend on this source for their irrigation water. The pumps saved the 1905 crops.

Again in the early 1930's a drought lowered the level of Utah Lake to such a marked degree that the pumps were useless until water was brought to the pumping pond by another canal built from farther out in the lake.

During two critical droughts water from Utah Lake has saved crops in the Salt Lake Valley via the canal constructed by Mr. Day and Mr. Rawlins.



# Irrigating

Utah farmer irrigating his land

Photo — courtesy Salt Lake City Chamber of Commerce



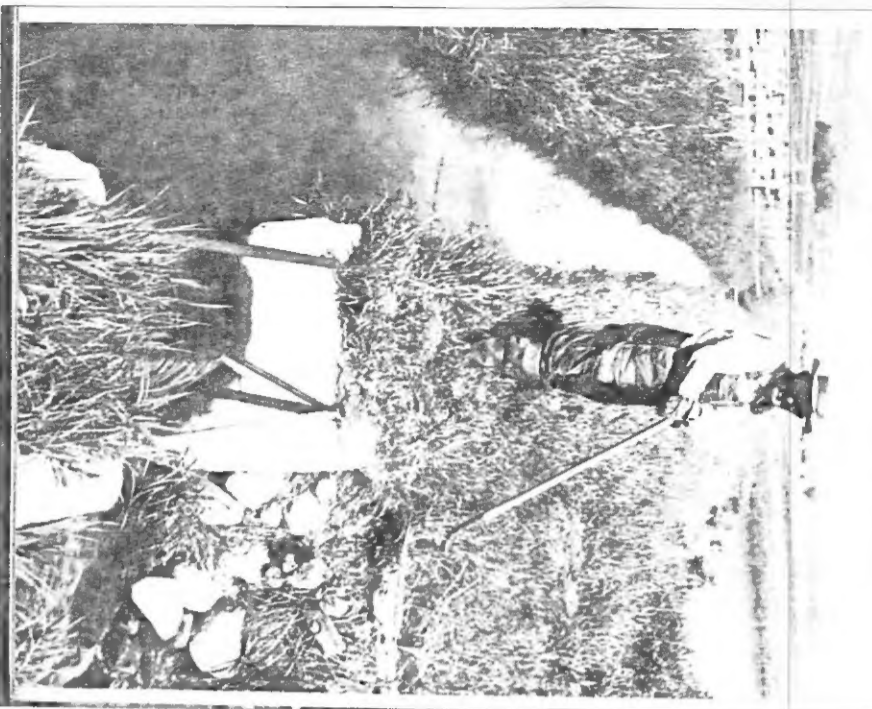
Utah farmer irrigating his land

Photo — courtesy Salt Lake City Chamber of Commerce

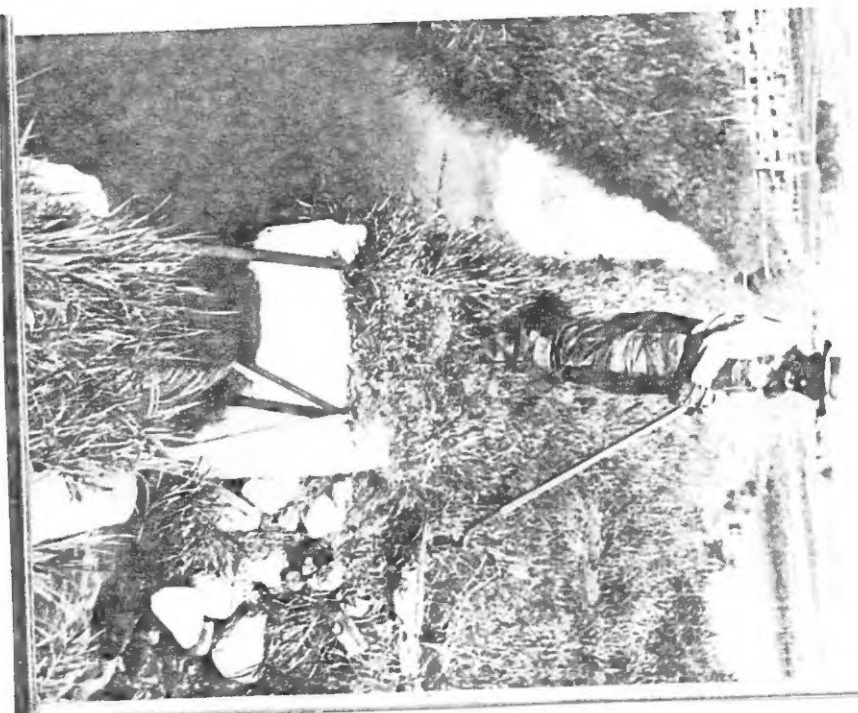


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Boat full

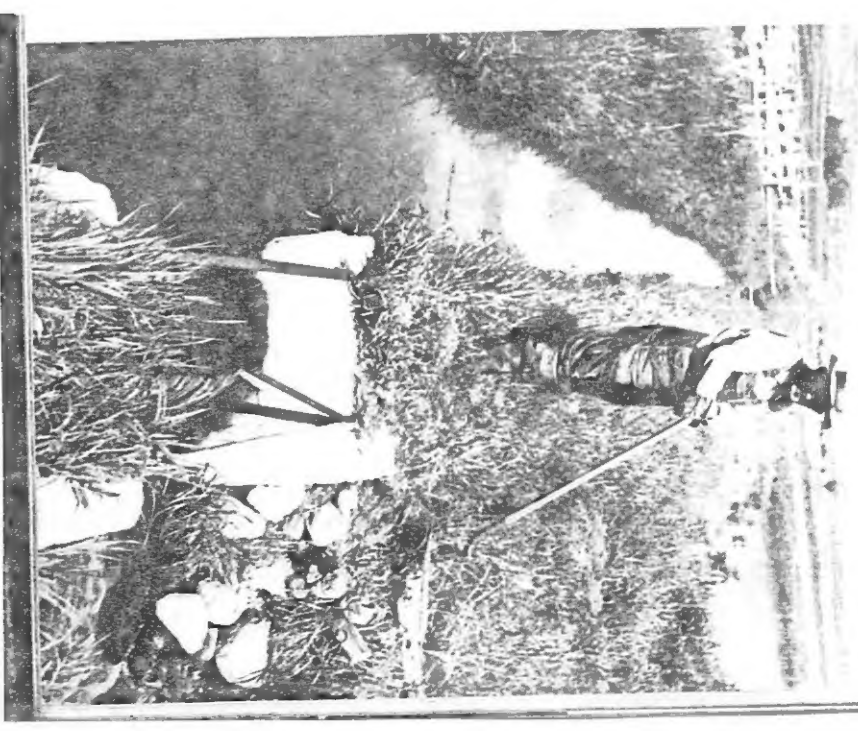
Utah farmer irrigating his land  
Photo—courtesy Salt Lake City Chamber of Commerce



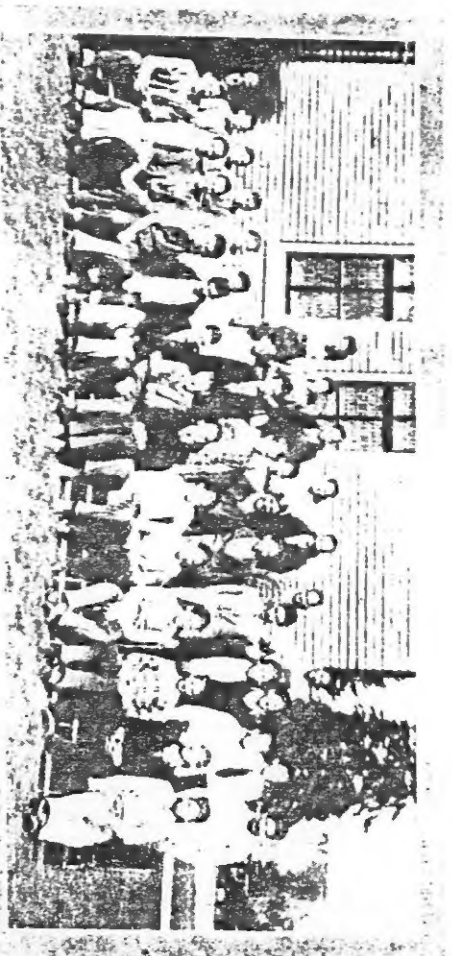
Utah farmer irrigating his land  
Photo — courtesy Salt Lake City Chamber of Commerce



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Photo — courtesy Salt Lake City Chamber of Commerce







## FUTURE FARMERS OF AMERICA

The Wasatch Chapter, Future Farmers of America had an unusually successful summer in 1930. Besides escaping the worst effects of the economic depression in most of its projects, the group had two enjoyable camping trips to Mt. Timpanogos and to Wolf Creek Summit. The Wasatch "Aggies" were prominent exhibitors and premium winners at the Wasatch Livestock show and the 1930 Utah State Fair. The entire chapter participated in an excursion to the State Fair.

In November all the project students celebrated "Project Completion Day" with a banquet at the Jensen Hotel. In state-wide competition, four Wasatch Future Farmers received distinction.

Lloyd Jordan with a pure bred sheep project; Bill Boyden with certified seed potatoes; Bob Watson with a ton-litter swine project; and LeGrande Simmons with a turkey project won the gold, silver, and bronze medals, and 250 baby chicks respectively, in recognition of their efforts.

Squirrel hunting, rabbit hunting, and coaling parties have been held. The 1931 outing will be a trip to Yellowstone Park.



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5/5/32

Utah State Farm Bureau.

Salt Lake City.

Enclosed find check for \$12.24 as invoice calls for, but previously the price of Canadian seed peas was quoted at 4.00 per cwt. kindly correct this error, on next bill. Thank you.

Their regular stock on these peas was exhausted by time your order was received and they had to buy on market which accounts for additional 50¢ cwt. We have no control over prices we quote as we just buy as orders are received. We did not know price had changed until we received the seed Co. invoice, or we would have notified you before shipping.

Yours Respectfully  
C. L. Watkins.

Sect.

They also bought coal by freight train carload & sold to local citizenry.

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DIRECTORS  
H. C. CLEGG  
A. B. MURDOCK  
C. L. WATKINS

A. B. MURDOCK, VICE PRESIDENT  
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JESSE NELSON  
FRANK CONRAD

HEBER, UTAH.

Utah State Farm Bureau.  
Salt Lake City.

5/5/32

Enclosed find check for \$13.24 as invoice calls  
for, but previously the pot Canadian seed previously  
quoted at 4.00 per cwt. Kindly correct this error,  
on next bill. Thank you.

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Yours Respectfully  
C. L. Watkins  
Secy.



# He Uses The Last Drop

HEBER CITY — It used to take Lloyd Lawton a full 24 hours to irrigate 90 acres of his farm near here. Today with his overnight storage reservoirs assisting, he gets the watering done in a day. And with the extra water he can irrigate more land.

The house trailer he bought for night irrigating now is used just for deer hunting.

In the dry Heber City area, it normally takes one share of water to irrigate one acre. So making 72 shares go around on 90 acres took some doing. Mr. Lawton said, "I want to make good use of all the water I am entitled to."

A look at the conservation work carried out on the Lawton place over 20 years shows how he tackles tough problems.

## LEVELS FARM

Mr. Lawton switched from running a garage to farming in 1940. He soon found he couldn't produce a full crop with the old irrigation system and lost no time in making needed changes.

To get better distribution of his irrigation water, he began leveling his farm. He built his own scraper during off hours. "My scraper carries about a yard-and-a-half of soil when it is heaped up," he said, "But it makes up in speed, what it lacks in size."

After leveling his farm, Mr. Lawton reorganized his irrigation system. Ditches and length



Farmer Lloyd Lawton of Wasatch County surveys filled ditch, green fields — conservation rewards.

of irrigation water runs were laid out to get proper water penetration. Headgates were installed for water control.

## STORAGE POND

Next, he constructed a pond for storage of irrigation water. This extra water enabled him to irrigate more acreage with the water he already had. With this system, he stores water by night and irrigates with it by day. This was advanced thinking for

the community.

He purchased another 60 acres close by his original 60 acres. This land had no water right. But Mr. Lawton figured by properly using the present water supply, he could irrigate 90 acres with hopes of eventually irrigating 110 acres. The other 10 acres would be used for his buildings and reservoir sites.

Not only was this new farm without a water right, but it was a rough weed patch. A friend

told Mr. Lawton, "That is the last farmland I would buy in the Heber Valley."

He recognized that soil has a great influence on land management. With this in mind he came to the Wasatch Soil Conservation District for information. The Wasatch SCD approved Lawton's request and asked Keith Beardall, Soil Conservation Service, to help develop a complete conservation plan.

Conservation practices included in his plan were crop rotation, a change in irrigation system and water management, land leveling, regulating reservoirs, water control structures and fertilizing.

In four years, Mr. Lawton leveled 30 acres and constructed a regulating reservoir of 10 acre feet capacity on each farm. "With these reservoirs," he said, "I can do all my irrigating during the day. And I can grow a good crop of peas and not worry about water when irrigation is needed."

## WINTER MOISTURE

Farmer Lawton not only believes in efficiently utilizing his irrigation water during the summer, but works to get winter moisture into the soil. He prepares the seedbed in the fall, drills seed in the spring. Using this method, soil is hardly disturbed, making moisture available for plant use. He also avoids compaction of the soil.

## NOTICE OF ASSESSMENT

### WASATCH IRRIGATION COMPANY

Principal Place of Business — 494 South Main, OK Tire Shop  
Heber City, Utah

Notice is hereby given that at a meeting of directors, held on September 14, 1979, an assessment of \$8.50 per share was levied upon all outstanding stock of the company with a minimum levy of \$4.50.

The same is now due and payable at the office of the secretary and the same will be declared delinquent if not paid by November 24, 1979. And will be subject to advertising and offered for sale at public auction at the office of the Company at 5:00 p.m., December 22, 1979, to pay advertising and assessment costs.

Office hours: Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Assessment \$1160.50 *from*

Ellis Clyde,  
Secretary

*14-35 Done*  
*12485*

*14,21*

## Wasatch County Farmers Urged To Use Computerized Farm and Ranch Program

Specialized data software is being used in Utah Valley Community College's (UVCC) farm and ranch management program for enterprise analysis and decision making.

"The program teaches farmers to computerize farm records by using specialized data software called ULTRA. This software provides farmers with readily available information that includes: checkbook reconciliation, labor summaries, cash-flow statements, actual budgets, and quarterly reports," said Paul Peterson, UVCC director of farm and ranch management.

Peterson explained that through the program, each farm family is visited each month. Data is then entered into a database using the

ULTRA software program. This database merges and compares statistics with other farms in the industry.

At the end of the year, a comprehensive 50-page analysis of their individual operation is developed using data software called the ANAKEY system. ANAKEY provides farmers an analysis of every phase of their operation, and reports the net profit of the farm.

A printed year-end analysis is also provided which includes all the information required for farmers and ranchers to complete their taxes.

"The goal of the program is to have farmers using their own computers and software on their farm site within three years from their

starting the program," said Peterson.

"Semi-annual group seminars are held to discuss management options and other pertinent information by utilizing special guest lecturers. The group approach also provides a forum for sharing," he said.

The farm and ranch management program is limited to 40 families due to the monthly visits and individualized training.

Farmers involved in this program are located in: Utah, Wasatch, Summit, Tooele, and Salt Lake counties.

For more information, call Paul Peterson, director of farm and ranch management at 222-8000, Ext. 8450.

*The Mountain West's first newspaper*

# DESERET NEWS

Founded June 15, 1850 Salt Lake City, Utah

## In our opinion

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# County Irrigators Asked To Vote on Assessment To Pay For Consultant

6-11-92

So many irrigation company presidents were absent from the Wasatch County Water Users Association meeting June 10, that they are being asked to vote by mail on whether or not they agree to an assessment to pay for a local Soil Conservation District water consultant.

David Wilson moved to assess irrigation water users 25 cents per acre per year, for a total of about \$5,000 per year for five years, to hire the water consultant, Jack Young. The assessments would be paid by Jan. 1 of each year.

Young would work with Heber Valley irrigators to determine their water needs and report them to the Central Utah Water Conservancy District, which is designing the valleywide sprinkling system. He also would help decide how to get the water to the farmers, and help them lay out their individual on-site systems.

Although everyone at the meeting voted in favor of the motion, only about 25 percent of the irrigation company residents were present. Therefore copies of the motion are being sent to those who were absent, asking them to mail in their votes.

Most county water users support

the proposed Heber Valley sprinkling system, a CUP conservation project, except a few farmers in the North Fields. Association President Cal Muir emphasized that it would not be forced on them.

Nevertheless, Young's services are important to North Fields irrigators, because the the main purpose for the sprinkling system is to conserve water. With flood irrigation, about 65 percent of the water runs off or goes into the ground and recharges the aquifer (underground water table), which has kept the North Fields naturally wet, explained Wilson. Sprinkling will reduce that amount to about 35 percent and how the new system will effect the North Fields must be determined.

Another problem for many North Fields irrigators, especially west of U.S. Highway 40 and along the north side of the valley, is that they have benefitted from the natural water supply without having to file for water rights, said Wilson. When the water supply is reduced, alternative water sources will have to be obtained to replace it, even though there are no records to document any need for water in the area.

Wilson distributed copies of the

final draft of the water distribution plan for the Utah Lake drainage basin and said the state engineer, Robert L. Morgan, had made very few changes from the previous draft.

The plan combines all irrigation companies in the drainage into a single management system and will affect all Provo River water users. Until now, each irrigation company has managed its own water use. Before the plan goes into effect, priority dates for each water right must be determined.

When the plan was first announced, local water users feared they might end up in line for water behind so many downstream users with earlier priority dates, that their agricultural operations would be in jeopardy. But Wilson said he is pleased with the final draft, particularly because the sprinkling system, which is part of the pending CUP Completion Act, will make it possible for agriculture to continue as usual in the valley with less water.

He pointed out that the county has been able to get everything it has asked for, including the sprinkling system which also will replace the Daniels Creek water that will be kept in the Strawberry Val-

ley, restoring the stream flows in the natural channels throughout the valley, and rehabilitating the Provo River fishery.

However, the new water distribution plan requires irrigators to research their water rights and to cooperate as the glitches are worked out over the next four to six years.

"Practically all of us have operated in our own little world in the past, in our own drainage...We've had almost sole control and management and ownership of it. That will not be the case anymore," said Wilson.

In a letter attached to the plan, Robert L. Morgan, the state water engineer, notes, "It has been nearly a year since we held the first public meeting to announce the proposed distribution plan for the Utah Lake drainage basin. During this time we have held four public meetings and submitted two drafts of the plan to the water users for their comments."

He says the State Division of Water Rights is simulating the effects of the plan, using actual water supply data, from last month through September.

All comments on the final draft should be submitted by Sept. 15.

The results of the study and any proposed modifications will be presented for discussion in a public meeting this Fall, and a final interim distribution plan will be implemented for one year, beginning Nov. 1.

Then the plan will be tried for three to five years. Morgan will evaluate the results at the end of each year and modify the plan as necessary.

One problem is that water rights under the new system will be based on assumed priority dates (when the water rights were first filed) that will be assigned, unless water users can document earlier dates, which local irrigators have expected. Normally, if there is an unresolved dispute between the State and an irrigator over a readjudication of water priorities or the number of water rights, the matter is taken to court to be settled.

But the changes are only part of an "interim plan", not a readjudication. Therefore, Wilson said rather than being able to settle disputes in court, water users who have objections probably will have to obtain restraining orders to keep Morgan from making changes in their water

rights.

In his letter, Morgan emphasizes "...this is NOT an adjudication and a number of the issues that have been raised will have to be addressed during the general adjudication procedure."

Wilson said he would get a legal evaluation of the plan and recommendations about what to do if disputes arise.

Wilson warned the water users, "Whether that priority date is assigned to you arbitrarily, whether you get evidence of a priority date and go to [Morgan] and establish it, is something you've got to do this summer...The individual companies would handle the water right administration and the readjudication. I guess it's time to get our people involved in it.

"If they want to take it as it comes, that's up to them. I assume if you take it as it comes, you'll get an 1880 [direct flow] priority date."



# Irrigation company presidents asked to vote by mail on local consultant

7-1-92  
By SONNI SCHWINN  
Herald Correspondent

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